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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: JANUARY 15, 2009

Summary: Most Pakistani newspapers on Thursday highlighted remarks attributed to Indian Army Chief General Deepak Kapoor that "Indian military is ready for a war" (with Pakistan). Also covered were remarks by Pakistan Foreign Office terming the statement as "most unfortunate." The English daily, "Dawn," ran as lead story spokesman McCormack remarks that "both India and Pakistan have successfully managed the tensions that followed the Mumbai terrorist attacks." All newspapers reported that Prime Minister Gilani reciprocated to the "New Year's Greetings" of his Indian counterpart, and reiterated "Pakistan's desire for friendly and cooperative relations with India." The English daily, "The News," in an exclusive story reported that "the concerned authorities in Pakistan are likely to recommend to the Parliament to abandon the proposed \$7.6 billion IPI gas pipeline project with Iran demanding higher gas prices."

Major newspapers focused editorials on the inauguration of the new U.S. administration and the possible direction of the U.S. foreign policy. The English daily, "Dawn," noted that "the good news is that key players in America are not in favor of a purely military approach to Pakistan. Ms. Clinton is hardly a gung-ho figure. Expect her to not take a back seat to the defense department." Another English daily, "The News," noted that "from a high point in 2003 the neocons influence has gradually waned, and now it may indeed be the time for the writing of their obituary. There is going to a multilateralist in the White House, a man committed to diplomacy and seemingly willing to talk to those who have not been talked to in recent years." Nationalist English daily, "The Nation," wrote: "Hillary Clinton's words, underscoring the need 'to pursue policies that improve the lives of the Afghan and Pakistani people' and to forge 'deeper engagement' with Islamabad and Kabul and other countries in the region, sound close to the concept of dealing with the causes that give rise to militancy than the present policy of mainly relying on armed action." End Summary.

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News Stories  
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"Indian Military Ready For War" "The Nation" (01/15)

"Indian Army Chief General Deepak Kapoor has said that Army is ready for all options to attack Pakistan but the government will take the final decision in this regard.... 'It must be clearly understood that we are keeping all our options open whether diplomatic, economic or as a last resort, the military one,' he said."

"Indian Army Chief Statement 'Most Unfortunate': FO" "The News" (01/15)

"Foreign Office spokesman Muhammad Sadiq on Wednesday termed statements from Indian leaders most unfortunate. He said Pakistan was making every effort to defuse tensions in South Asia and had repeatedly stated that it was prepared to extend its cooperation to

India."

"Pak-India Tensions Managed, Says U.S." "Dawn" (01/15)

"Both India and Pakistan have successfully managed the tensions that followed the Mumbai terrorist attacks, the U.S. State Department said on Wednesday, downplaying media reports that both countries had deployed additional troops on their border. Spokesman Sean McCormack said the two sides had managed tensions well and he did not see the situation going out of hand."

"U.S. Urges India, Pak To Share More Info On Mumbai Attacks" "The Nation" (01/15)

"The United States has said it would like to see more exchange of information between India and Pakistan on investigations related to Mumbai attack, so that you can get to the bottom of exactly who was responsible, see the entire plot and hold all responsible for their actions, State Department spokesperson Sean McCormack told reporters on Wednesday."

"India Urged To Avoid Fuelling Tension; Gilani Sends Goodwill Message" "Dawn" (01/15)

"Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani on Wednesday reiterated Pakistan's desire for friendly and cooperative relations with India, Gilani said in a message to his Indian counterpart Dr. Manmohan Singh, thanking him for his New Year greetings. 'May the New Year bring peace to our region and progress and prosperity to our people,' Mr. Gilani said."

"IPI Gas Plan May Not See The Light Of Day" "The News" (01/15)

"With Iran demanding higher gas prices, authorities concerned in Pakistan are likely to recommend to the Parliament to abandon the proposed \$7.6 billion IPI gas pipeline project, a Petroleum Ministry officials on anonymity revealed to 'The News' in Islamabad on Wednesday."

"U.K. Supports Prosecution Of Suspects In Pakistan" "Dawn" (01/15)

"Rejecting India's demand for extradition of 'suspects' of the Mumbai attacks, British Foreign Secretary David Miliband has said the U.K. supports their prosecution in Pakistan as they have 'broken the law' of that country, Mr. Miliband said in Karan (India) Thapar's 'Devil's Advocate' program."

"World Should Help Pakistan Fight Terrorism: Miliband" "Daily Times" (01/15)

"British Foreign Secretary David Miliband urged the world community on Wednesday to help Pakistan fight the war on terror, according to a private TV channel."

"Response To Dossier In A Week" "The Nation" (01/15)

"Pakistan has finalized its formal response to India's dossier on Mumbai attacks and it will be given to New Delhi in a week's time with reiteration of offer for joint probe and also describing the so-called Indian evidence as scanty and insufficient, said a senior official in Islamabad on Wednesday desiring not to be named."

"Pattern Of Evasiveness In Pak Response" "Daily Times" (01/15)

"India said on Wednesday that Pakistan's response to the Mumbai terror attacks reflects a 'continuing pattern of evasiveness and denial,' and claimed that statements by Pakistani leaders reinforce doubts over Islamabad's capacity to act against terror. The comments by External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee came in response to Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani's statement that what India had provided Pakistan was information, not evidence."

"India To Approach UNSC For Custody Of Masood Azhar" "Daily Times" (01/15)

"India is considering moving the UNSC for extradition of Masood Azhar, chief of the banned Jaish-e-Muhammad, CNN-IBN reported on its website."

"LT Commander Furious At Jamaatud Dawa Leaders" "The News" (01/15)

"Chief operational commander of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LT) Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi, arrested on December 10 by the Pakistani authorities in the wake of the Mumbai attacks, is furious at the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) leadership's decision to publicly disown him in his hour of trial instead of trying to bail him out."

"Indian Foreign Policy To Make Dictator Proud, Says Report" "Dawn" (01/15)

"Although India is the world's most populous democracy, its current foreign policy often would make a confirmed dictator proud, says a U.S. human rights report released on Wednesday. 'The Indian government lacks the will and capacity to implement many laws and policies designed to ensure the protection of rights,' observes Human Rights Watch, a U.S.-based rights group."

"India, U.S. Discuss Missile Defence" "The Post" (01/15)

"Concerned about the threats emerging from Pakistan in the wake of the November terror attack in Mumbai and the predominant position of China, official sources told Asia Times Online that there had been considerable acceleration in India-U.S. efforts to jointly build a ballistic missile defense (BMD) system."

"Govt. Agreed Not To Challenge Musharraf's Actions: HRW" "Dawn" (01/15)

"U.S. air raids have been a political liability for President Asif Ali Zardari, who has called on the U.S. to stop them, says a human rights group.... The report claims that the new government has accepted demands from the army for transfer of power on the basis of 'legal continuity, whereby the new government would not challenge the legal basis of Pervez Musharraf's rule nor attempt to hold him or the army legally accountable for the former president's coups and abuses during his time in power.'"

"U.S. Invites NA Defence Committee For Briefing" "Daily Times" (01/15)

"The U.S. has invited the National Assembly's Defence Committee to the U.S. to brief the Pakistani lawmakers on Washington's efforts against terrorism, a private TV channel reported on Wednesday. The U.S. ambassador had sent the invitation to NA Speaker Dr Fehmida Mirza a few days ago, according to the channel. The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad was still awaiting a reply."

"Obama supports Pakistan economic aid expansion" "Daily Times," "The News" (01/15)

"United States Secretary of State-designate Hillary Clinton on Wednesday assured lawmakers of President-elect Barack Obama's support for a congressional measure tripling non-military assistance for Pakistan. Clinton also vowed to pursue a 'positive' relationship with Pakistan towards addressing the 'tough and complicated' problem of extremism afflicting the region."

"United States Provides Security Equipment To The Frontier Police" "Daily Times," "The News," "The Nation," "The Post," "Jang," "Express" (01/15)

"The United States Government, through the Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) of the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, will provide a total of \$4.1 million in security equipment to the Frontier Police in Peshawar."

"Pakistan Torn Over How To Handle Taliban" "Daily Times" (01/15)

"After years of allowing Taliban to operate in the Tribal Areas, Pakistan is now torn over how to respond to the United States' calls for a decisive action against the extremists. Islamabad is under intense pressure from Washington, other western nations and Kabul to eliminate Taliban and Al Qaeda havens in the tribal belt, from where fighters are said to stage attacks on foreign forces in Afghanistan. But experts say Pakistan's desire to please the U.S., a vital political and military ally, has run up against its own strategic interests in the region and its loyalty to Pashtuns, the predominant

ethnicity among the Taliban. 'Pakistan's Taliban policy has suffered from indecisiveness, inconsistency and ambiguity,' political analyst Hasan Askari told AFP."

"Torkham Sealed To Prevent Entry Of Militants From Afghanistan"  
"Dawn" (01/15)

"Security forces carrying out an operation against militants in Landi Kotal imposed a day-long curfew and demolished houses of four suspected militants on Wednesday. The Torkham border was sealed to prevent the entry of Afghans into the area."

"U.S. Seeks Supply Route Via Kazakhstan" "Dawn" (01/15)

"The United States is talking to Kazakhstan about using the former Soviet Republic as a transit point for supplies to NATO troops in Afghanistan, U.S. Central Command Chief General David Petraeus said on Wednesday."

"Supplies To NATO Forces Resume" "The News" (01/15)

"Supplies to the NATO forces resumed early Wednesday after a brief suspension on account of the military operation in the Khyber Agency."

"TTP Claims Attack On Containers" "The News" (01/15)

"The Mohmand Agency chapter of banned Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) on Wednesday claimed to have fired rockets on NATO containers and threatened more such attacks if the government did not halt operation in tribal areas."

"DSP Gunned Down In Quetta" "Dawn" (01/15)

"A DSP and three police personnel were killed when gunmen attacked their vehicle here on Wednesday. The Lashkar-i-Jhangvi, a banned extremist organisation, claimed responsibility for the killing."

"Gaza Toll 1,023 As Peace Hopes Rise" "The Nation" (01/15)

"Israel sought to tighten the screw on Hamas on Wednesday as the death from its war on Gaza passed 1,023, carrying out new bombing raids and waging more street battles as hopes rose of a ceasefire."

"Over 300 Children Among Gaza Dead, Says UNICEF" "Dawn" (01/15)

"The head of the UN children's agency said on Wednesday that more than 300 children had been killed and over 1,500 wounded in Gaza because of Israeli offensive. Ann M. Veneman, Executive Director of UNICEF, said in a statement released on Wednesday that children and their families were trapped in relentless violence."

"Red Cross Shocked At Gaza Situation" "The News" (01/15)

"The humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip is 'shocking,' the head of the International Committee of the Red Cross said after a visit to a hospital in the embattled territory."

"Usama Urges Jihad Against Israel" "The Nation" (01/15)

"Al Qaeda Chief Usama bin Laden urged Muslims to launch Jihad against Israel and condemned Arab governments as allies of the Jewish state in a new message aimed at harnessing anger in the Mideast over the Gaza offensive."

"Sensitive Leaks To U.S. Media Cost Durrani His Job" "The News" (01/15)

"Maj. Gen. (R) Mehmud Ali Durrani was sacked as National Security Advisor for leaking information about Zarar Shah, a leader of the banned Lashkar-e-Taiba (LT), to the U.S. media, an official confided to 'The News' in Islamabad on Wednesday."

"Govt. Decides Not To Appoint New Security Adviser" "The News" (01/15)

The government has decided not to appoint a new national security adviser after the sacking of Mehmud Ali Durrani, a Federal Minister,

who claims to be close to President Asif Ali Zardari as well as the Prime Minister told 'The News' in Islamabad on Wednesday."

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Editorials/Op-eds  
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"U.S. Diplomacy And Pakistan," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (01/15)

"Unsurprisingly, Ms. Clinton was short on specifics - those will become apparent in the weeks and months ahead. Yet, from a Pakistani perspective, there were several clues about what lies ahead. First, a healthy dose of realism: Pakistan does not lie at the centre of the American universe.... For Pakistan it is important to remember that the country is only one, albeit an important, piece in the global jigsaw puzzle that the American diplomatic corps led by Ms. Clinton will need to assess and assemble.... The good news is that key players in America are not in favor of a purely military approach to Pakistan.... Ms. Clinton is hardly a gung-ho figure. Expect her to not take a back seat to the defence department."

"Decline Of The Neocons," an editorial in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/15)

"Beyond the American failure in Iraq and something considerably less than success in Afghanistan, there lies a deeper and more fundamental failure.... We may now come to understand that the neocons belonged to the last century, and that the new American century is going to be shaped by Obama.... From a high point in 2003 the neocons influence has gradually waned, and now it may indeed be the time for the writing of their obituary. There is going to be a multilateralist in the White House, a man committed to diplomacy and seemingly willing to talk to those who have not been talked to in recent years."

"New Approach Afoot?," an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (01/15)

"Hillary Clinton's words, underscoring the need 'to pursue policies that improve the lives of the Afghan and Pakistani people' and to forge 'deeper engagement' with Islamabad and Kabul and other countries in the region, sound closer to the concept of dealing with the causes that give rise to militancy than the present policy of mainly relying on armed action..... Therefore, whatever steps the U.S. might take would fall short of achieving the objective of restoring peaceful conditions unless a clear strategy of vacating the country is adopted. The sooner that realization takes places the better for everyone."

"Biden's 'Package' And Our Response," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (01/15)

"It is easy to ordain in a fiery column that Pakistan should look for 'other friends' but no one points out where to go to find someone willing to part with the kind of money America is willing to spend on Pakistan. The crux of the problem is our refusal to grasp the danger extremism and terrorism pose to us and the world. If the Biden-Lugar money is tainted in our minds because it will force us to 'fight our own people,' let us not forget that the entire world including China supports America's war against terrorism without the willingness to give us the money we need."

"Need Of Unity Among Muslim States," an editorial note in the Karachi-based, pro Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (01/15)

"Ever since Pakistan's creation our rulers followed the U.S. policies blindly, but the United States never considered Pakistan as its true friend, or a trustworthy ally. Whenever Pakistan confronted hard time, the U.S. never came to help out Pakistan. On the contrary, the U.S. all the time extended its full support to India and Israel. Following 9/11 incidents, it was Pakistan that made sacrifices for the U.S., and played pivotal role in the war on terror, but it (U.S.) made a nuclear deal with India. Indeed, the

U.S. spared no opportunity to destabilize Pakistan from within. To deal with all internal and external threats, there is a need to create national unity and reconciliation in the country and to struggle on diplomatic fronts to improve Pakistan's image worldwide."

"Use Of Power Is Not The Solution To Global Issues," an editorial in liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (01/15)

"Admiral Mike Mullen has said that use of U.S. military might is not the solution to all global issues and that it is through diplomacy and civilian channels that issues can be resolved.... The U.S. administration must heed what Mike Mullen has said so that we can see positive results in efforts to ensure global peace and eliminate terror - goals that the Bush administration could not achieve in its eight years."

"Horror Amid The Hills," an editorial in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/15)

"The situation in Swat is grotesque. It is shameful that we have allowed this to happen in our midst; that in Islamabad the government keeps up pretence of normalcy and claims it is succeeding against militancy. The situation in Swat receives sporadic media attention; occasionally human rights activists speak out against it. Far more urgent action is needed. There is not time any longer to watch and wait. The federal government needs to intervene to stop the atrocities in Swat."

"Miliband's Defense Of Pakistan's Stand In Presence Of Mukherjee," an editorial in the popular rightist Urdu-language daily "Ausaf" (cir. 10,000) (01/15)

"British Foreign Minister David Miliband has told the entire world that Pakistan, as a state, has no role in the Mumbai carnage.... Now the Indian leaders must open their eyes, and abandon this mudslinging approach right away. However, if India continues to intensify tension, and build up pressure on Pakistan, it (Pakistan) will be left with no option except to relocate its all troops from Afghan border to its eastern boundary, and neither the U.S., nor Britain would tolerate that move, as it will certainly hamper the ongoing global drive against terrorism."

"Pakistan: Indian Allegations, Britain's Denial," an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (01/15)

"The statement by Britain's Foreign Minister shows that the country has categorically rejected Indian stand vis-à-vis Mumbai attacks. Prior to this, America has also officially said that Pakistan intelligence or government was not involved in the Mumbai incidents. The Government of Pakistan should also contact other friendly countries to help India see reason in this regard."

"Truthfulness Of British Foreign Minister," an editorial in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 125,000) (01/15)

"British Foreign Minister David Miliband, addressing joint press conference with Indian counterpart in New Delhi, opposed extradition of Mumbai attack accused arrested in Pakistan to India. He said that the state of Pakistan was not involved in the Mumbai attack.... Everyone in the west is not Bush or Tony, some are truthful and we understand that Miliband is one of those.... Now both Pakistan and Britain should also condemn the barbarity that continued under Bush."

"Quibble On 'Information' And 'Evidence'," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (01/15)

"This is a most unfortunate quibbling on the words 'evidence' and 'information.'... Pakistan must cooperate through an honest investigation of the 'information' provided by India and see if it becomes 'evidence.'"

"Blood Is Spilling In Streets Of Gaza," an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (01/15)

"It is ironical that the U.S. President-elect Barack Obama has miserably failed to raise his voice against this naked aggression, which amounts to active encouragement to the Jewish State to continue with its repressive agenda. This partisan approach will make it difficult for him to play any role for resolution of the Middle East conflict without which there can't be any durable peace in the region."

"Shah Abdullah's Timely Concern," an editorial in the Lahore-based populist center-right Urdu daily "Khabrain" (cir. 50,000) (01/15)

"In a message Conveyed Through Prince Maqran, Saudi King Abdullah has urged the Pakistani political leadership to unite and pay attention to defense and the economy.... A very important part of the King's message is that 'Pakistan is the most important country of the Muslim world and the entire Muslim world wants to see a strong Pakistan.'... Today, if India is bent upon harming Pakistan, the reason is that it is by harming and weakening Pakistan that it can gain supremacy over the Muslim world. Seen in this perspective, King Abdullah's concern is very timely and important, and our leadership should heed it."

Patterson